

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 17-29 will be active in the application subsequent to entry of this Amendment.

As a preliminary matter, counsel wishes to confirm the status of the current Official Action. On the sheet Office Action Summary box 2a) and box 2b) are both marked. It is counsel's understanding that this being a first Action subsequent to an RCE, the rejection would not be final. Moreover, the electronic file of this application indicates this to be a **non-final** Action. The response to follow will be based upon this understanding that the rejection is not a final one.

The examiner indicates that claims 13, 15 and 16 are objected to but otherwise allowable; *see* the Office Action Summary item 7 as well as items 4 and 5 of page 6 of the Action.

It is applicants' intention to amend their claims and direct them to allowable subject matter following the examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 13, 15 and 16. To this end a new claim set is provided.

The new independent claims 17, 18 and 19 include all the limitations of the old base claim 1 and the old claims 13, 15 and 16, respectively, which the examiner indicates as allowable claims.

The new independent claims 20, 21 and 22 also include all the limitations of old base claim 2 and the old claims 13, 15 and 16, respectively, which the examiner indicates as allowable claims.

If for any reason this Amendment does not place all claims in condition for allowance the examiner is urged to contact the undersigned in order to resolve any issues or discrepancies.

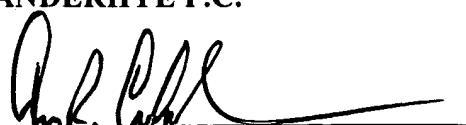
Favorable action on the merits is awaited.

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Appl. No. 10/530,717
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Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



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